



Press Release

Immediate Release

15 November 2023

### **Mental health service user finds comfort through poetry**

A patient receiving mental health support from a Bradford hospital has spoken of the positive difference that poetry is making to her recovery.

Cygnet Hospital Bierley, part of the Cygnet Health Care division, has recently taken part in a programme called 'Music 2 Empower' to provide creative sessions for its' service users.

For service user Chloe, the initiative has been life-changing and poetry is proving pivotal to her ongoing recovery journey.

She explained how music and creative arts has always played an important part in her life. She said : "I've been listening to music since I was very small. My first taste of music was when my Dad took me to a Limp Bizkit concert when I was 8 years old. I loved it."

Chloe said her mental health struggles began when she was 13 years old and experienced bullying at school. She ended up dropping out of education and, in her words, had to "battle away" through the next few years.

She had her first daughter when she was 19 years old and ended up suffering with severe Post-Natal Depression. Following the birth of her second daughter, six years later, the PND returned and she realised she needed professional help. Despite receiving community mental health support, things continued to go downhill.

She was eventually admitted onto Cygnet Hospital Bierley's Blossom Ward, an acute mental health service for women and was diagnosed with Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder.

Cygnet Health Care launched the 'Music 2 Empower' initiative in 2019 and has since rolled out the programme across its hospitals, supporting music therapy-related projects throughout the organisation and allowing service users like Chloe to showcase their abilities, give hope, inspire others and benefit from this well-established psychological approach.

Chloe added: "When you are admitted into hospital it is so easy to go into your room, lock the door and never come out. But you don't get better like that.

"Poetry for me is a way of escaping and it's so important that you stick to what you love doing.

"I used to write poetry to give to my friends and family to express how I felt without telling them. It was easier to communicate on paper and I could explain things better.

"I find it really therapeutic, I still struggle to tell people how I feel, writing it down is so much easier."

Chloe shares her poetry online and said the feedback has been really positive with one person saying her poems had "saved their life".

Javed Razzaq, Activities Co-ordinator, explains the difference he has noticed in Chloe through the Music 2 Empower programme.

He said: "When I first met Chloe on the ward she was very low in mood, anxious and worried. She was trying to find her feet and wouldn't leave her room. Her confidence was very low.

"As soon as I started mentioning music she latched onto it and came into the social hub.

"She expresses her feelings through music and there's a total change from where she was, to where she is now. There's been a massive improvement.

"If she's having a bad day, she'll come into the recording studio and it helps her to express herself and relax."

Dr Tony Romero, CEO of Cygnet Group added that he was proud to see the impact Music 2 Empower is having across Cygnet's services. He said: "Music can be a powerful agent for change. Being creative and expressing yourself through music is an important outlet for many of our service users. Although our connection to music can be incredibly personal, projects like Music 2 Empower allow our service users who have shared experiences to come together and experience the benefits of being around like-minded individuals.

"Music is an important tool which can bring a renewed sense of purpose, achievement and motivation to reach personal recovery goals and ultimately this can have a hugely positive impact on mental wellbeing.

"Hearing from directly from service users about the life-changing impact this initiative is having on them and their recovery is very inspiring."

To watch Chloe's Music 2 Empower video, go to:

<https://vimeo.com/883339191/5bfb61aa5b>

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

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